

COMMENTS ON ETHNIC COMPOSITION AND ATTITUDES OF THE POPULATION OF SUMATRA

The original native populations of the areas being considered in this memorandum are all basically of Malaysian origin.

Sumatra's racial composition has been perhaps the least influenced by influx of other population groups. The basic native composition of Sumatra's population includes major ethnic groups classified by anthropologists as Coastal Malay, Minangkabau, Batak, Atjehnese, the Redjang-Lampung group, and Niassans, in addition to numerous minor groups. Numbers and significant characteristics of these groups are shown on the attached table.

Java's native racial composition, including Javanese, Sundanese, and Madurese, forms by far the largest, numerically, of the groups being considered here, but it has been more strongly influenced than Sumatra by outside population groups as a result of more far reaching economic development by the Dutch during the colonial period and by a more active and influential Chinese merchant and commercial class. Numerous reports indicate, however, that much of the Chinese population has been rather thoroughly "Indonesianized" insofar as political feelings are concerned.

Appraisal of popular feeling in Sumatra toward Java as compared with that toward Malaya is difficult. Javanese and Sundanese immigrants to Sumatra, as a result of the Government's transmigration program and of recruitment for work on rubber and tobacco estates, have had difficulty in adjusting to the Sumatran environment -- both physical and cultural. Reports of open hostility between Bataks and Javanese in northeast Sumatra, for example, suggest antagonism between the two cultures. Most sources indicate strong distrust and suspicion on the part of the major ethnic groups in the interior of Sumatra toward all outsiders. Feelings of loyalty to a Java-based central government are not strong. On the other hand, ethnic Malays occupying major areas on Sumatra's east coast have historically had fairly close contacts with the Malay Peninsula and may be considered to provide a cultural tie between the two areas.

Except for Javanese immigrants in South Sumatra and in the vicinity of Medan, there appears no strong reason to conclude that the population of Sumatra would not have as strong or possibly even stronger ethnic, linguistic, religious, and economic ties with Malaya than it has had with Java.

Furthermore, it should be noted that Sumatra's overwhelmingly Malaysian population would more than offset Singapore's Chinese majority in any possible Malaya-Singapore-Sumatra political union.

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MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS IN SUMATRA

Ethnic Group ¹	Estimated Number and Percent of Total Population of Sumatra ²	Geographic Location	Language(s) ³ Spoken	Alphabet Used	Religion(s) and Social Organization
Coastal Malay	3,500,000 30.4%	East coast of Sumatra	Malay	Arabic variation and Latin	Muslim, Animist; Patrilineal social organization
Minangkabau	2,000,000 17.4%	Central-west Sumatra	Minangkabau (closely related to Malay)	Arabic variation and Latin	Muslim; Matrilineal social organization
Batak	1,000,000 8.7%	North-central Sumatra (Lake Toba area)	Batak, with dialects; Dairi, Toba, and Mandailing.	"Batak" and Hindu variation	Muslim in south, Christian in center and north; Patrilineal social organization
Atjehnese	750,000 6.5%	Atjeh, in North Sumatra	Atjehnese	Arabic variation and Latin	Muslim; aristocratic social organization, with division into classes
Redjang-Lampung Group	500,000 4.4%	Southwest coast of Sumatra	Redjang-Lebong, Lampung	Hindu variation	Nominally Muslim; lax in observance; Patrilineal social organization
Niassans	200,000 1.7%	Nias Island area	Niassese	Latin	Christian in North; Animist in South.

NOTE: Sumatra also has approximately 1,500,000 inhabitants of Javanese and Sundanese origin who have migrated to Sumatra as a result of recruitment of laborers for rubber and tobacco estates in the Medan area and of the Government sponsored transmigration program in South Sumatra. They reportedly cling, insofar as possible, to the way of life to which they were accustomed on Java.

- 1 _____
- 2 Numerous minor ethnic groups are not included because of their relative insignificance in number and influence.
- 3 Total population of Sumatra is estimated at 11,500,000.
- 3 Bahasa Indonesia, the new official language, is spoken by educated groups. Knowledge of Dutch is still common among better educated groups, although instruction in English as a second language has become increasingly common in recent years.

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS IN JAVA

Ethnic Group	Estimated Number and Percent of Total Population of Java	Geographic Location	Language Spoken ²	Alphabet Used	Religion and Social Organization
Javanese	35,000,000 63.6%	Central and east Java	Javanese	Hindu variation and Latin	Muslim; aristocratic social organization with division into classes
Sundanese	12,000,000 21.9%	West Java	Sundanese	Latin	Muslim; aristocratic social organization with division into classes
Madurese	7,000,000 12.7%	Madura and east Java	Madurese	Latin	Muslim; aristocratic social organization with division into classes.

¹ Total population of Java is estimated at 55,000,000.

² Bahasa Indonesia, the new official language, is spoken by educated groups. Knowledge of Dutch is still common among better educated groups, although instruction in English as a second language has become increasingly common in recent years.

COMPOSITION OF POPULATION -- FEDERATION OF MALAYA AND SINGAPORE (1955)

	<u>Malaysians</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Indians and Pakistanis</u>	<u>All Others</u>	<u>Total</u>
FEDERATION OF MALAYA	3,000,000	2,300,000	715,000	90,500	6,105,500
SINGAPORE	150,000	950,000	94,000	41,700	1,235,700